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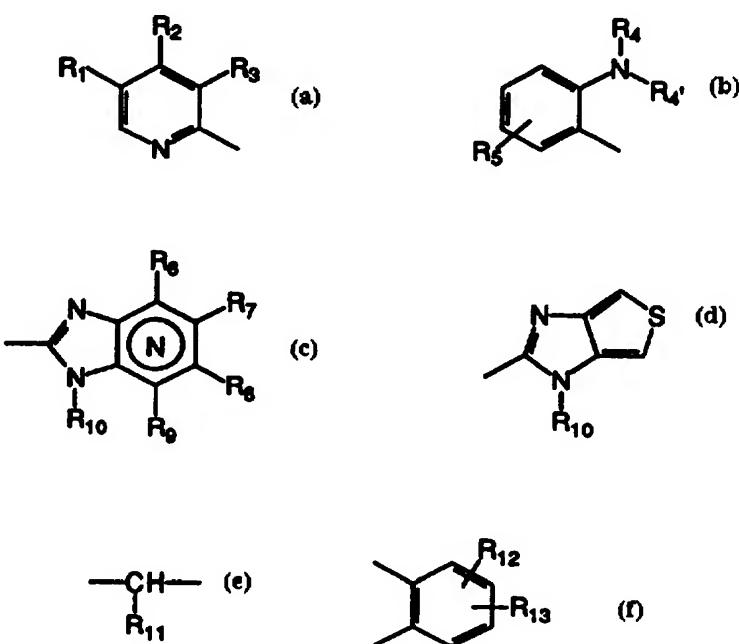
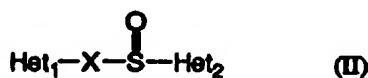
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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):	ASTRA AKTIEBOLAG [SE/SE]; S-151 85 Södertälje (SE).		
(72) Inventors; and		Published	
(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only):	GRAHAM, Daniel [GB/GB]; 31 Haslemere Road, Childwall Valley, Liverpool L25 2SE (GB). HOLT, Robert [GB/GB]; 3 Village Way, Kirkby, Fleetham, Northallerton DL7 0TW (GB). LINDBERG, Per [SE/SE]; Gundas gata 40, S-431 51 Mölndal (SE). TAYLOR, Stephen [GB/GB]; Hillview House, Cleasby, Darlington, Co. Durham DL2 2QY (GB).	With international search report.	
(74) Agent:	ASTRA AKTIEBOLAG; Patent Dept., S-151 85 Södertälje (SE).		

(54) Title: ENANTIOSELECTIVE PREPARATION OF PHARMACEUTICALLY ACTIVE SULFOXIDES BY BIOREDUCTION

## (57) Abstract

A compound of formula (II), either as a single enantiomer or in an enantiomerically enriched form, wherein Het<sub>1</sub> is (a) or (b), and Het<sub>2</sub> is (c) or (d), and is (e) or (f) (wherein N in the benzimidazole moiety of Het<sub>2</sub> means that one of the carbon atoms substituted by any one of R<sub>6</sub> to R<sub>9</sub> optionally may be exchanged for an unsubstituted nitrogen atom; R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, alkoxy optionally substituted by fluorine, alkylthio, alkoxyalkoxy, dialkylamino, piperidino, morpholino, halogen, phenylalkyl, phenylalkoxy; R<sub>4</sub> and R<sub>4'</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aralkyl; R<sub>5</sub> is hydrogen, halogen, trifluoromethyl, alkyl, alkoxy; R<sub>6</sub>-R<sub>9</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, alkoxy, halogen, haloalkoxy, alkylcarbonyl, alkoxycarbonyl, oxazolyl, trifluoroalkyl or adjacent groups R<sub>6</sub>-R<sub>9</sub> may complete together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached optionally substituted ring structures; R<sub>10</sub> is hydrogen or alkoxy carbonyloxymethyl; R<sub>11</sub> is hydrogen or forms an alkylene chain together with R<sub>3</sub>; R<sub>12</sub> and R<sub>13</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, halogen or alkyl) is obtained by stereoselective bioreduction of a compound of formula (II) in racemic form.



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Enantioselective preparation of pharmaceutically active sulfoxides by bioreduction

- The present invention relates to a method of obtaining compounds as defined below,  
5 either as a single enantiomer or in an enantiomerically enriched form.

Background to the Invention

The racemic form of the compounds prepared by the method of the present invention  
10 are known compounds. Some of the compounds are also known in single enantiomeric form. The compounds are active H<sup>+</sup>K<sup>+</sup>ATPase inhibitors and they, including their pharmaceutically acceptable salts, are effective acid secretion inhibitors, and known for use as antiulcer agents. The compounds, which include the known compounds omeprazole (compound of formula (IIa) below), lansoprazole  
15 (compound of formula (IIc) below) and pantoprazole (compound of formula (IIb) below), are known for example from European Patent specifications EP 5129 and 124495, EP 174726 and EP 166287.

These compounds, being sulfoxides, have an asymmetric centre in the sulfur atom, i.e.  
20 exist as two optical isomers (enantiomers). It is desirable to obtain compounds with improved pharmacokinetic and metabolic properties which will give an improved therapeutic profile such as a lower degree of interindividual variation.

The separation of enantiomers of omeprazole in analytical scale is described in e.g. J.  
25 Chromatography, 532 (1990), 305-19. Also the separation of enantiomers of compounds with which the present invention is concerned, including omeprazole and pantoprazole, is described in German Patent Specification DE 4035455.

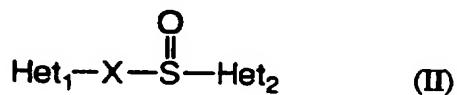
Recently there has been a great deal of literature published relating to the synthesis of  
30 optically active compounds using biocatalysts. The majority of this work has been aimed at finding routes to single enantiomer forms of pharmaceuticals. The reactions

receiving most attention have been those involved in the preparation of esters, acids and alcohols due to the general utility of these functionalities in synthesis and also because the biocatalysts are readily available.

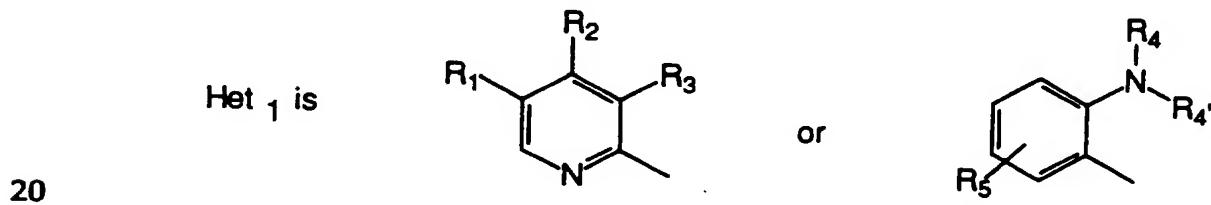
- 5 Studies on the synthesis of optically active sulfoxides are relatively rare partly due to the small number of pharmaceuticals containing sulfoxide groups and partly due to the fact that enzymes that react with the sulphur centre are not available commercially. The enantioselective reduction of methylphenylsulfoxide to the sulfide has been discussed by Abo M., Tachibana M., Okubo A. and Yamazaki S. (1994) Biosci. Biotech. Biochem. 58, 596-597.

#### Description of the Invention

- According to the present invention there is provided a method of obtaining a  
15 compound of formula (II) either as a single enantiomer or in an enantiomerically enriched form:

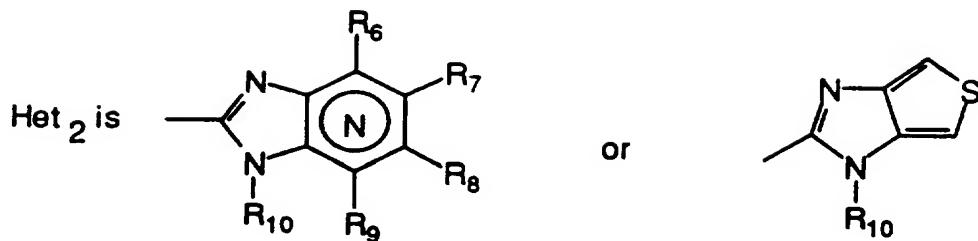


wherein:



20

and



and



5 wherein:

N in the benzimidazole moiety of Het<sub>2</sub> means that one of the carbon atoms substituted by any one of R<sub>6</sub> to R<sub>9</sub>, optionally may be exchanged for an unsubstituted nitrogen atom;

10

R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, alkoxy optionally substituted by fluorine, alkylthio, alkoxyalkoxy, dialkylamino, piperidino, morpholino, halogen, phenylalkyl, phenylalkoxy;

15 R<sub>4</sub> and R<sub>4'</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aralkyl;

R<sub>5</sub> is hydrogen, halogen, trifluoromethyl, alkyl, alkoxy;

20 R<sub>6</sub> - R<sub>9</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, alkoxy, halogen, haloalkoxy, alkylcarbonyl, alkoxy carbonyl, oxazolyl, trifluoroalkyl or adjacent groups R<sub>6</sub> - R<sub>9</sub> may complete together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached optionally substituted ring structures;

R<sub>10</sub> is hydrogen or alkoxy carbonyloxymethyl;

R<sub>11</sub> is hydrogen or forms an alkylene chain together with R<sub>3</sub>;

- 5 R<sub>12</sub> and R<sub>13</sub> are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, halogen or alkyl;  
which method comprises stereoselective bioreduction of a compound of formula (II) in racemic form.
- 10 The compounds of formula (II) are active H<sup>+</sup>K<sup>+</sup>ATPase inhibitors.

The compounds of formula (II) possess a stereogenic (asymmetric) centre which is the sulphur atom which forms the sulfoxide group between the Het<sub>1</sub>-X- and Het<sub>2</sub> moieties. The compounds of formula (II) generally are a racemic mixture initially.

- 15 In the method according to the present invention the starting compound of formula (II) in racemic form is stereoselectively bioreduced to the corresponding sulfide of the formula:

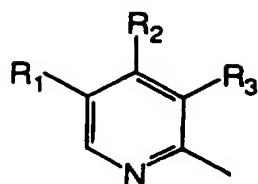


- 20 (wherein Het<sub>1</sub>, X and Het<sub>2</sub> are as defined above). Thus there is obtained compound of formula (II) as a single enantiomer or in enantiomerically enriched form which may be separated from the sulfide produced.

- 25 In the above definitions alkyl groups or moieties may be branched or straight chained or comprise cyclic alkyl groups, for example cycloalkylalkyl.

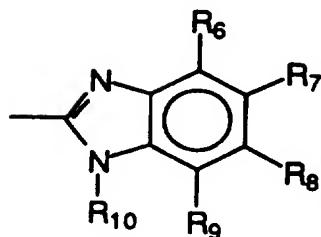
Preferably:

Het<sub>1</sub> is



and

Het<sub>2</sub> is

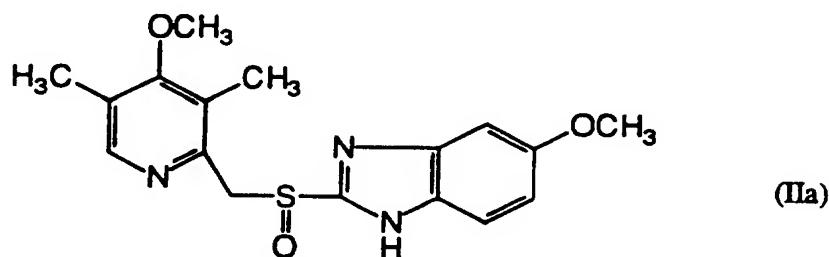


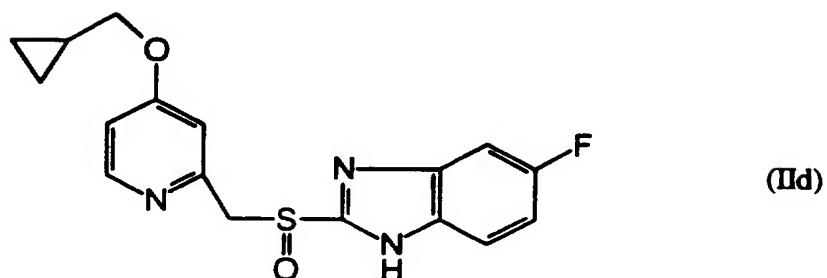
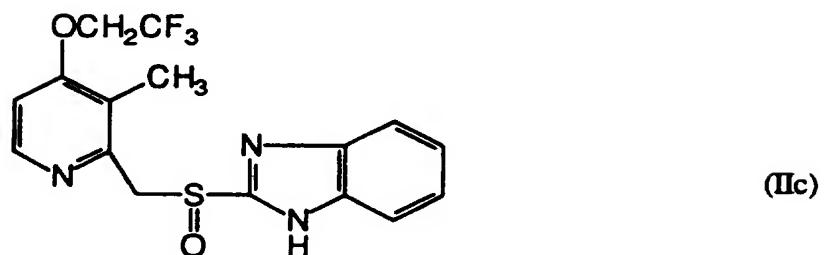
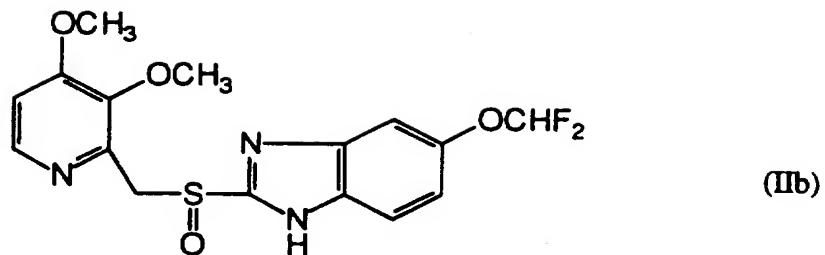
5 and



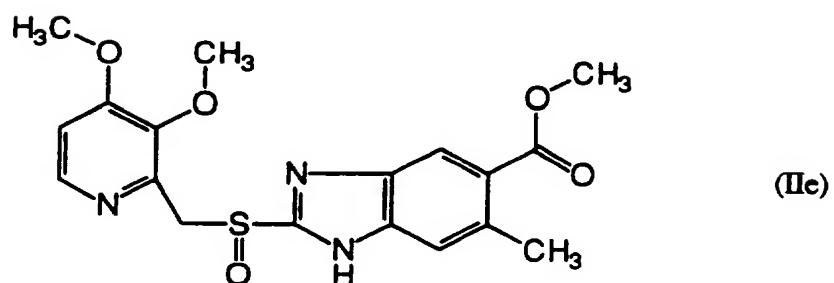
(wherein R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>6</sub> - R<sub>9</sub>, R<sub>10</sub> and R<sub>11</sub> are as defined above).

Most preferably the compounds with which the method of the present invention is  
concerned are compounds of the formula (IIa) to (IIe):

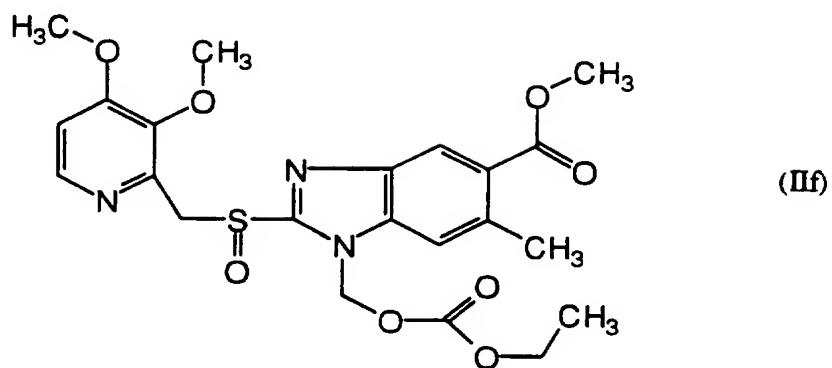




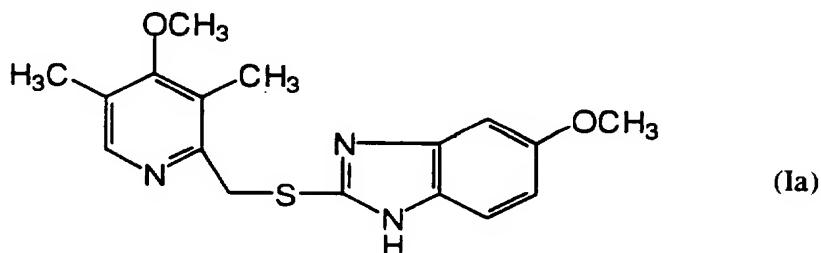
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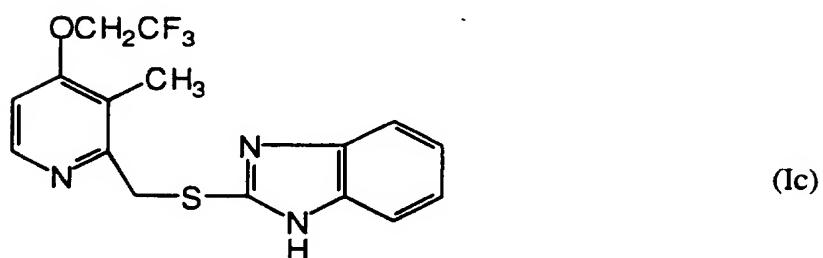
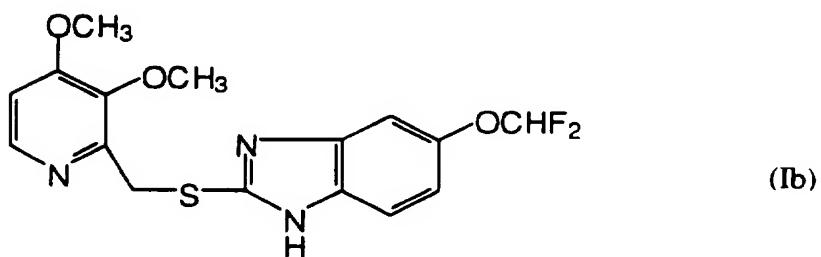
An example of a compound of formula (II) wherein  $R_{10}$  is alkoxycarbonyloxymethyl is

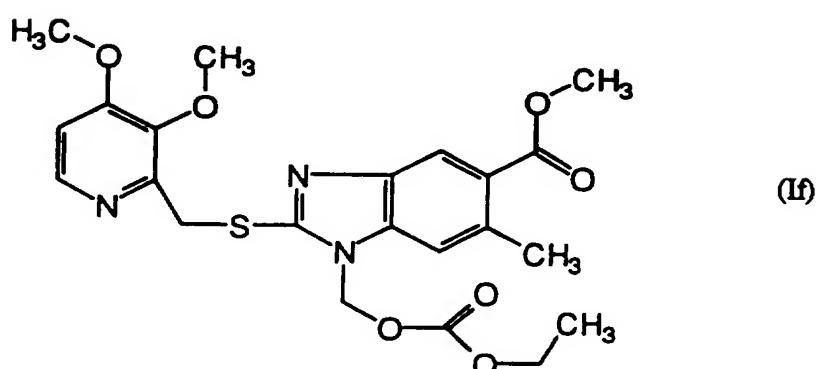
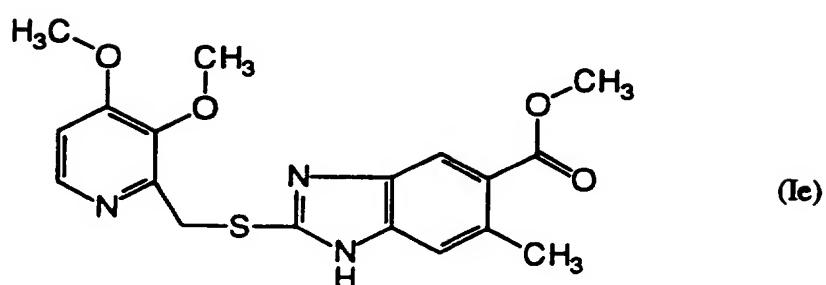
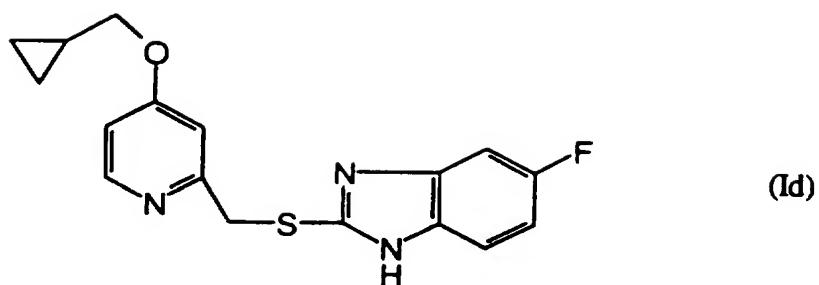


The sulfides formed from the compounds (IIa) - (IIf) will be respectively



5





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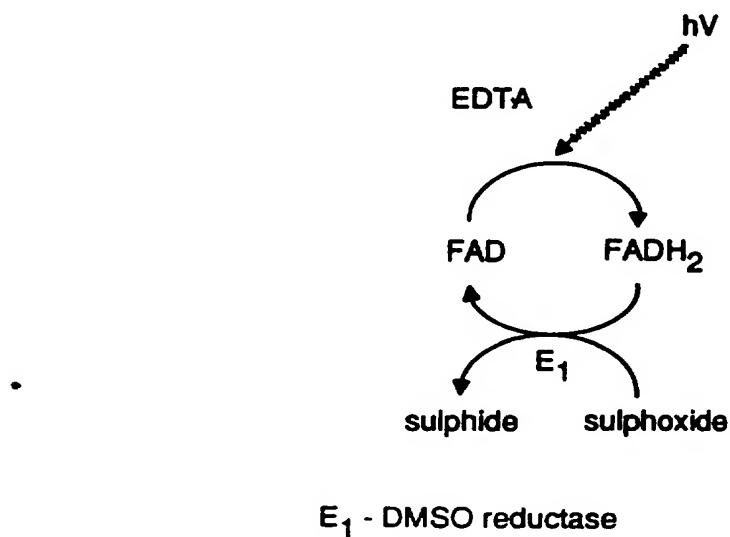
- The stereoselective bioreduction according to the present invention may be carried out using a microorganism or an enzyme system derivable therefrom. The organisms used in the method according to the present invention are suitably organisms containing DMSO reductase, for example enterobacteriaceae such as E. Coli and Proteus sp., and purple non-sulfur bacteria of the genus Rhodobacter.
- 10

Also there may be used DMSO reductase to effect the bioreduction.

Using DMSO reductase, under anaerobic conditions a cofactor flavin adenine dinucleotide (FAD) or flavin mononucleotide (FMN) for example may be photo-reduced in the presence of ethylene diamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA). The re-oxidation of the FAD or FMN is coupled to the reduction of the sulfoxide via the DMSO reductase. Hence an artificial biocatalytic cycle is generated in the absence of the cells natural anaerobic electron transport mechanism.

5

#### Photo catalysed DMSO Reductase Reaction



10

The compounds of formula (II) are generally acid labile and thus the use of acid conditions is to be avoided. Generally the method according to the invention may be carried out at a pH of 7.6 to 8, suitably about 7.6, and at temperature of 25 to 35°C, suitably about 28°C.

15

According to one embodiment of the invention the method comprises contacting the compound of formula (II) with a microorganism which is:

Proteus vulgaris

20

Proteus mirabilis

Escherichia coli

Rhodobacter capsulatus

The microorganisms used are preferably:

- 5      Proteus vulgaris NCIMB 67  
      Proteus mirabilis NCIMB 8268  
      Escherichia coli ATCC 33694  
      Rhodobacter capsulatus DSM 938

These microorganisms are available from the following culture collections.

- 10     NCIMB  
         National Collection Of Industrial And Marine Bacteria  
         23 Saint Machar Drive  
         Aberdeen AB2 1RY  
15     United Kingdom

- ATCC  
American Type Culture Collection  
12301 Parklawn Drive  
20    Rockville Maryland 20852  
      United States of America

- DSM  
Deutsche Sammlung von Mikroorganismen  
25    Mascheroder Weg 1b  
      D-38124  
      Braunschweig  
      Germany

- 30    The present invention will now be illustrated with reference to the Examples.

EXAMPLE 1

- The reductive resolution of the compound of formula (IIa) was investigated using whole cells of E. Coli ATCC 33694, Proteus vulgaris NCIMB 67, Proteus mirabilis NCIMB 8268 and a preparation of DMSO reductase from Rhodobacter Capsulatus DSM 938. E. Coli and the two strains of Proteus were grown under essentially anaerobic conditions in 1 litre screw capped flasks containing 800 ml of medium at 35°C for 48 hours on a rotary shaker. The basal culture medium used had the following composition (g/l): NaH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, 1.56; K<sub>2</sub>HPO<sub>4</sub>, 1.9; (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, 1.8;
- MgSO<sub>4</sub>·7H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.2; FeCl<sub>3</sub>, 0.005; Na<sub>2</sub>MoO<sub>4</sub>·2H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.001; casamino acids, 1.5. After autoclaving this was supplemented with the following components (g/l): glycerol (for Escherichia coli) or glucose (for Proteus mirabilis), 5; thiamine-HCl, 0.03; nicotinic acid, 0.007. Dimethylsulfoxide (70mM) was added to the medium to serve as terminal electron acceptor for anaerobic respiration and as inducer for dimethylsulfoxide reductase. Trace elements solution (1 ml/litre) was also added to the medium. The stock trace elements solution contained (g/l): CuSO<sub>4</sub>·5H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.02; MnSO<sub>4</sub>·4H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.1; ZnSO<sub>4</sub>·7H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.1; CaCO<sub>3</sub>, 1.8. E. Coli was also grown anaerobically on the same medium under the same conditions but with 40 mM of fumarate as electron acceptor.
- Cells were harvested by centrifuging and washed twice in 10 mM phosphate buffer, pH 7.6. The cells were then resuspended in 100 mM phosphate buffer, pH 7.6 to give a dry cell weight concentration of 3-6 g/l.
- 50 ml of each cell suspension was then placed in an autotitrator vessel and stirred without aeration in the presence of 0.1-0.3 g/l substrate and glucose (2.5%) at 35°C. The pH was maintained at 7.6 by autotitration with 0.5 mM NaOH.
- Cells of Rhodobacter capsulatus DSM 938 where grown and DMSO reductase enzyme prepared as describes in Example 2, below. The reductive resolution of the compound

of formula (IIa) using said enzyme preparation was then carried out as described in Example 2, except that the compound of formula (IIa) was present at a substrate concentration of 2.9 mM.

5    Detection of Products

The bioreduction of the compound of formula (IIa) was followed by reverse phase HPLC on a Spherisorb S5-ODS2 reverse phase column eluted with a 50:50 mixture of acetonitrile and 25 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 7.6 at a flow rate of 0.8 ml/min.

10   Under such conditions the compounds of formula (IIa) and (Ia) were well resolved with retention times of 5.2 and 9.8 minutes respectively. Both compounds were detected at a wavelength of 300 nm.

The enantiomeric composition of the compound of formula (IIa) remaining was

15   investigated by the following method. After removal of biomass the aqueous media was extracted with two volumes of ammonia saturated dichloromethane. The pooled organic extracts were dried over anhydrous sodium sulfate and the solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure to afford a pale brown solid. Then the enantiomeric composition of sulfoxide was determined by HPLC on a Chiralpak AD

20   Column under the following conditions:

	Column	Chiralpack AD 250 mm x 4.6 mm interior diameter with 50 mm guard column
25	Eluent	Hexane:Ethanol:Methanol (40:55:5% V/V)
	Flow	1.0 ml/min
	Injection Volume	20 µl
	Wavelength	300 nm
30	Retention times	
	Compound of formula (Ia)	5.1 min

**Compound of formula (IIa):**

(+) Enantiomer	8.5 min
(-) Enantiomer	13.4 min

5

The results in Table 1 were obtained for E. Coli ATCC 33694:

**TABLE 1**

Electron Acceptor	Dry Cell Weight g/l	Time (min)	Compound of formula (IIa) (ppm or mg L <sup>-1</sup> )	Compound of formula (Ia) (ppm or mg L <sup>-1</sup> )	ee (%)	E
Fumarate	6	0	76	0	-	-
		5	65	10	-	-
		15	42	33	-	-
		30	33	42	-	-
		40	30	45	-	-
		65	27	47	-	-
		90	25	50	-	-
		130	22	53	>99	11
DMSO	6	0	74	0	0	-
		15	47	22	28	-
		35	40	34	74	-
		45	34	38	90	20

- 10 In the above Table E is the enantiospecificity constant which may be determined from the extent of conversion and enantiomeric excess of the unreacted compound from the following equation:

$$E = \frac{\ln [(1 - C) \times (1 - ee_s)]}{\ln [(1 - C) \times (1 + ee_s)]}$$

$$15 \quad E = \frac{\ln [(1 - C) \times (1 + ee_s)]}{\ln [(1 - C) \times (1 - ee_s)]}$$

where C = conversion

$ee_s$  = enantiomeric excess of the unreacted compound.

Also in the above table ee is the enantiomeric excess value for the (+) enantiomer of  
 5 the compound of formula (IIa). The enantiomeric excess value gives an indication of  
 the relative amounts of each enantiomer obtained. The value is the difference  
 between the relative percentages for the two enantiomers. Thus, for example, when  
 the percentage of the (-) enantiomer of the remaining sulphoxide is 97.5% and the  
 percentage for the (+) enantiomer is 2.5%, the enantiomeric excess for the (-)  
 10 enantiomer is 95%.

At a starting concentration of 0.3 g/l both P. vulgaris NCIMB 67 and P. mirabilis  
 NCIMB 8268 afforded the (+) enantiomer of the compound of formula (IIa) in >99%  
 enantiomeric excess after 48 h (Table 2) in yields of 32% and 5% respectively.

15

TABLE 2

<u>P. vulgaris</u> NCIMB 67		<u>P. mirabilis</u> NCIMB 8268	
Ratio of Enantiomers		Ratio of Enantiomers	
	(+)	(+)	(-)
Time hours			
0	50	50	50
24	79	21	67
48	>99	<1	>99
			<1

The final concentration of the compound of formula (IIa) after 48 hours was 48  
 20 mg/litre for P. vulgaris NCIMB 67 and 8 mg/litre for P. mirabilis NCIMB 8268.

At a lower starting concentration of 0.1 g/l both organisms again afforded the (+) enantiomer of the compound of formula (IIa) in >99% enantiomeric excess, but after 24 hr (Table 3A) in 44% and 40% yields for P. vulgaris NCIMB 67 and P. mirabilis NCIMB 8268 respectively.

5

TABLE 3A

		<u>P. vulgaris</u> NCIMB 67		<u>P. mirabilis</u> NCIMB 8268	
		Ratio of Enantiomers		Ratio of Enantiomers	
		(+)	(-)	(+)	(-)
Time hours					
0		50	50	50	50
5		78	22	79	21
24		>99	<1	>99	<1

The final concentration of the compound for formula (IIa) after 24 hours was 22 mg/litre of P. vulgaris NCIMB 67 and 20 mg/litre for P. mirabilis NCIMB 8268.

- 10 The compound of formula (IIa) acts as a substrate for the isolated DMSO reductase from Rhodobacter capsulatus as shown in Table 3B. The conversion of total sulfoxide after 15 minutes and after 1 hour was 80% and > 90% respectively.

TABLE 3B

<u>R. capsulatus</u> DSM 938		
Ratio of Enantiomers		
	(+)	(-)
Time		
0	50	50
15 minutes	50	50
1 h	15	85

EXAMPLE 2

The reductive resolution of compounds of formula (IIb) and (IIc) was investigated with E. coli ATCC 33694, P. vulgaris NCIMB 67, and a preparation of DMSO

- 5 reductase from R. capsulatus DSM 938. The reaction conditions were as described in Example 1 for E. coli and P. vulgaris except the compounds of formula (IIb) and (IIc) were present at a substrate concentration of 0.1 g/l. Where a preparation of DMSO reductase was used, the reaction conditions were as follows:
- 10 Cells of R. capsulatus DSM 938 were grown phototrophically in 25 l carboys containing RCV medium supplemented with 50 mM DMSO between two banks of 100 W tungsten bulbs. Cells were harvested by cross-flow filtration followed by centrifugation at 10,000 rpm in a Beckman GSA rotor for 30 min. The pellets were washed once with 50 mM Tris/HCl pH 8.0 and resuspended to approximately 2 g/ml in 50 mM Tris/HCl pH 8.0 + 0.5 M sucrose and 1.5 mM EDTA (STE buffer).
- 15 Lysozyme was added at 0.6 mg/ml and the suspension (approx 1l) was stirred at 30°C for 15 min. After centrifugation as described above the supernatant (periplasmic fraction) was decanted off and brought to 50% saturation with ammonium sulphate. Following centrifugation the supernatant was brought to 70% saturation and re-
- 20 centrifuged. The 50 - 70% pellet was resuspended in a minimum volume of 50 mM Tris/HCl pH 8.0 and dialysed against 3 x 100 volumes of the same buffer being concentrated to approx 5 ml by ultra-filtration through an Amicon PM 10 membrane. The concentrated sample was brought to 150 mM NaCl, charged onto a Sephadryl S200 gel filtration column (column vol = 510 ml) and eluted with 700 ml of 50 mM
- 25 Tris/HCl pH 8.0 + 150 mM NaCl. Peak enzyme activity eluted at approx 320 ml (data not shown) and peak fractions were pooled and concentrated as above.

The "RCV" medium used in this Example had the following composition (g per litre of deionised water or as mM):

30

Propionate 30 mM

	(NH <sub>4</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub>	1 g
	KPO <sub>4</sub> buffer	10 mM
	MgSO <sub>4</sub> .7H <sub>2</sub> O	120 mg
	CaCl <sub>2</sub> .2H <sub>2</sub> O	75 mg
5	Sodium EDTA	20 mg
	FeSO <sub>4</sub> .7H <sub>2</sub> O	24 mg
	Thiamine hydrochloride	1 mg
	Trace element soln.	1 ml

10 Trace element solution (per 250 ml)

	H <sub>3</sub> BO <sub>3</sub>	0.7 g
	MnSO <sub>4</sub> .H <sub>2</sub> O	398 mg
	Na <sub>2</sub> MoO <sub>4</sub> .2H <sub>2</sub> O	188 mg
15	ZnSO <sub>4</sub> .7H <sub>2</sub> O	60 mg
	Cu(NO <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>2</sub> .3H <sub>2</sub> O	10 mg

The purified DMSO reductase from Rhodobacter capsulatus DSM 938 was used in the photo-catalysed assay for the reduction of sulfoxide. A 5 ml gas-tight syringe was  
20 filled with approx 3 ml of degassed assay buffer, 50 mM Tris/HCl, 10 mM EDTA, pH 8.0. Flavin mononucleotide (FMN) and sulfoxide were added to the syringe to give final concentrations of 250 µM and 0.3 mM respectively (based on a final volume of 5 ml). The FMN was then reduced via illumination with a tungsten lamp. The DMSO reductase sample (2-10 mg : 2-10 µM) was then added to the solution and the volume  
25 made up to 5 ml with degassed buffer. The syringe was then illuminated as before. A 1 ml sample was removed immediately (t=0) and subsequent sampling repeated over the desired timecourse.

Detection of Products

- The bioreduction of the compounds of formula (Ib) and (Ic) was followed by reverse phase HPLC as described in Example 1 except that the retention times were as follows:
- 5 follows:

TABLE 4

Compound of Formula	Retention Time (min)
Ib	8.1
IIb	4.2
Ic	10.5
IIc	5.7

- 10 The enantiomeric composition of the compounds of formula (IIb) and (IIc) remaining was investigated by the method of Example 1 except that in the chiral HPLC step, the solvent composition, flow rate and retention time were as follows:

TABLE 5

Compound of Formula	Solvent Composition	Flow Rate (ml/min)	Retention Time (min)
IIb	Hexane/Ethanol (70:30% v/v)	1.0	32.3 (Enantiomer A) 36.6 (Enantiomer B)
IIc	Hexane/Ethanol (70:30% v/v)	0.5	34.3 (Enantiomer A) 36.3 (Enantiomer B)

- 15 The enantiomer which eluted first is referred to as enantiomer A and the second as enantiomer B.

The following results were obtained:

TABLE 6

Biocatalyst	Time (hr)	Ratio of enantiomers of formula (IIb)		Conversion (%)
		A	B	
<i>E. coli</i> ATCC 33694	0	50	50	-
	2	45	55	68
	20	40	60	-
	44	<1	>99	89
<i>P. vulgaris</i> NCIMB 67	0	50	50	-
	2	53	47	75
	6	53	47	75
	48	53	47	75

Conversion values were for the percentage conversion of the compound of formula (IIb) to the compound of formula (Ib).

5

TABLE 7

Biocatalyst	Time (hr)	Ratio of enantiomers of formula (IIc)		Conversion (%)
		A	B	
<i>E. Coli</i> ATCC 33694	0	50	50	-
	2	39	61	83
	20	21	79	96
<i>P. vulgaris</i> NCIMB 67	0	50	50	-
	2	40	60	45
	6	40	60	54
	48	38	62	85
DMSO reductase ( <i>R. capsulatus</i> DSM 938)	0	50	50	-
	0.25	41	59	31
	1.5	41	59	54

Conversion values were for the percentage conversion of the compound of formula (IIc) to compound of formula (Ic).

10

EXAMPLE 3

The reductive resolution of compounds of formula (IId) and (Ile) was investigated.

5

E. coli ATCC 33694 and Proteus mirabilis NCIMB 8268 were screened for the reductive resolution of compounds of formula (IId) and (Ile). Both organisms were grown anaerobically with fumarate as terminal electron acceptor and glycerol (E. coli) or glucose (Proteus mirabilis) as carbon source according to the method of Example 1.

- 10 After 48 hrs growth at 35°C the cells were harvested by centrifuging at 8k rpm and 4°C and washed by resuspending in 10 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 7.6 and centrifuging as above. The cells were finally resuspended in 100 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 7.6. The dry cell weights were 8 g/l (E. coli) and 4.5 g/l (Proteus mirabilis) for the compound of formula (IId) and 4.3 g/l (E. coli) and 3.9 g/l (Proteus mirabilis) for the compound of formula (Ile). The reductive resolution of the compounds of formula (IId) and (Ile) was investigated in an autotitrator containing 40 ml cell suspension, 100 ppm of either substrate and 1 % w/v glucose as energy source.
- 15

Detection of Products

20

The bioreduction of the compounds of formula (IId) and (Ile) was followed by reverse phase HPLC as described in Example 1 except that the retention times were as follows:

TABLE 8

Compound of formula	Retention Time (min)
Id	13.7
IId	5.0
Ie	9.4
Ile	4.3

The enantiomeric composition of the compounds of formula (IId) and (IIe) remaining was investigated by the method of Example 1 except that in the chiral HPLC step, the solvent composition, flow rate and retention time were as follows:

5 TABLE 9

Compound of Formula	Solvent Composition	Flow Rate (ml/min)	Retention Time (min)
IId	Hexane/Ethanol (70:30 % v/v)	1.0	12.9 (Enantiomer A) 21.7 (Enantiomer B)
	Hexane/Ethanol/Methanol (40:55:5 % v/v)	1.0	7.4 (Enantiomer A) 10.6 (Enantiomer B)
IIe	Hexane/Ethanol (70:30 % v/v)	1.0	26.0 (Enantiomer A) 30.5 (Enantiomer B)

The enantiomer which eluted first is referred to as enantiomer A and the second as enantiomer B.

- 10 The results for the reduction of the compound of formula (IId) by both E. coli ATCC 33694 and P. mirabilis NCIMB 8268 were as follows:

TABLE 10

Microorganism	Conversion (%)	Enantiomeric excess (%)	Enantiomer	E
<u>E. Coli</u> ATCC 33694	79	88	B	4
<u>P. mirabilis</u> NCIMB 8268	66	90	B	8

- 15 The conversion values were for the percentage conversion of compound of formula (IId) to compound of formula (Id).

The reduction of the compound of formula (IIe) by E. coli and P. mirabilis afforded 'B' enantiomer in high enantiomeric excess.

TABLE 11

Microorganism	Conversion (%)	Enantiomeric excess (%)	Enantiomer	E
<i>E. coli</i> ATCC 33694	78	98.2	B	7
<i>P. mirabilis</i> NCIMB 8268	70	>99	B	11

5

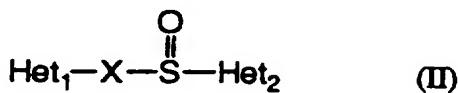
The conversion values were for the percentage conversion of the compound of formula (IIe) to the compound of formula (Ie).

These conversion figures were determined from the aqueous dissolved concentration  
10 of sulfoxide at the end of the reaction. The magnitude of the enantiospecificity constant is similar to that obtained for the reductive resolution of the compound of formula (IIa) by *E. coli* ATCC 33694 and *Proteus mirabilis* NCIMB 8268.

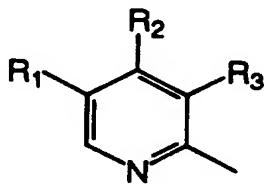
CLAIMS

1. A method of obtaining a compound of formula (II) either as a single enantiomer or in an enantiomerically enriched form:

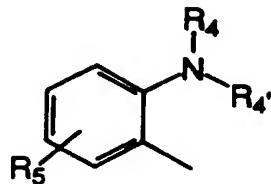
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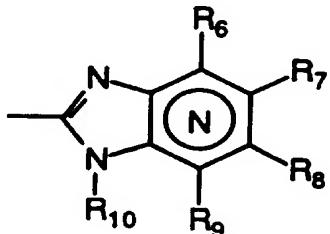
wherein:

Het<sub>1</sub> is

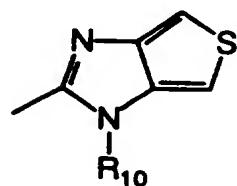
or



and

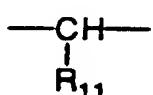
Het<sub>2</sub> is

or

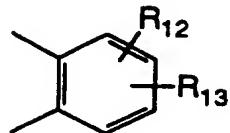


10 and

X is



or



wherein:

- 15 N in the benzimidazole moiety of Het<sub>2</sub> means that one of the carbon atoms substituted by any one of R<sub>6</sub> to R<sub>9</sub> optionally may be exchanged for an unsubstituted nitrogen atom;

$R_1$ ,  $R_2$  and  $R_3$  are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, alkoxy optionally substituted by fluorine, alkylthio, alkoxyalkoxy, dialkylamino, piperidino, morpholino, halogen, phenylalkyl, phenylalkoxy;

5  $R_4$  and  $R_4'$  are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, aralkyl;

$R_5$  is hydrogen, halogen, trifluoromethyl, alkyl, alkoxy;

10  $R_6$  -  $R_9$  are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, alkyl, alkoxy, halogen, haloalkoxy, alkylcarbonyl, alkoxy carbonyl, oxazolyl, trifluoroalkyl or adjacent groups  $R_6$  -  $R_9$  may complete together with the carbon atoms to which they are attached optionally substituted ring structures;

$R_{10}$  is hydrogen or alkoxy carbonyloxymethyl;

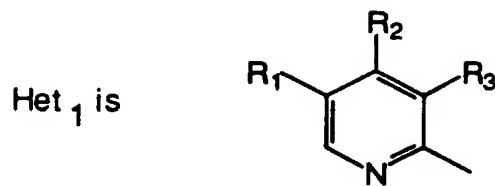
15

$R_{11}$  is hydrogen or forms an alkylene chain together with  $R_3$ ;

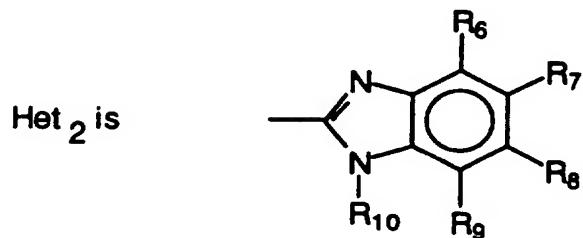
$R_{12}$  and  $R_{13}$  are the same or different and selected from hydrogen, halogen or alkyl;

20 which method comprises stereoselective bioreduction of a compound of the formula (II) in racemic form.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein:



and

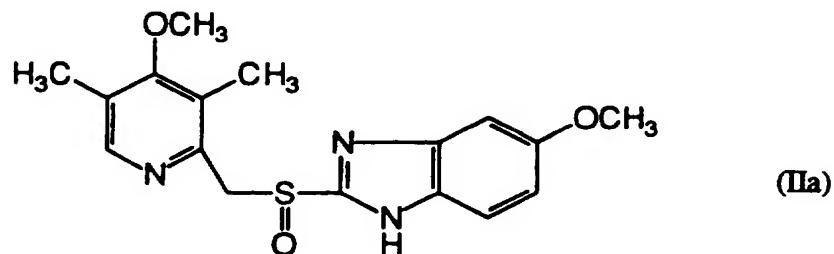


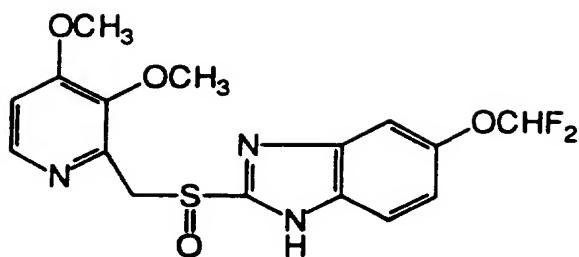
5 and



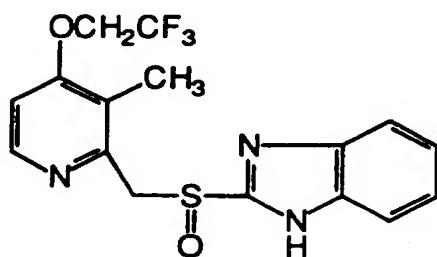
(wherein R<sub>1</sub>, R<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>3</sub>, R<sub>6</sub> - R<sub>9</sub>, R<sub>10</sub> and R<sub>11</sub> are as defined in claim 1).

10 3. A method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the compound of formula (II) is a compound of formula:

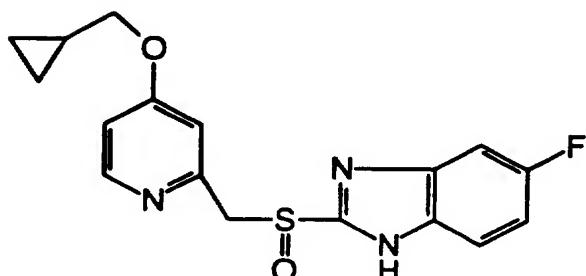




(IIIb)

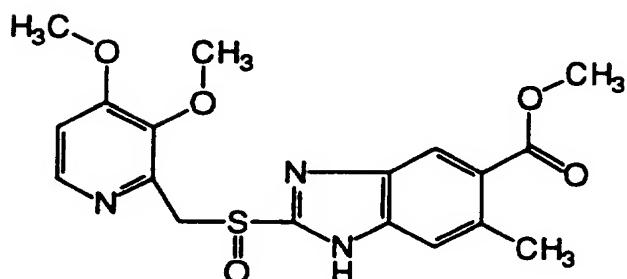


(IIIc)



(IIId)

5



(IIIE)

4. A method according to any one of the previous claims wherein a single enantiomer of the compound of formula (II) is obtained.

10

5. A method according to claim 3 wherein the compound of formula (II) is the compound of formula (IIa) and the bioreduction is carried out with

Proteus vulgaris

Proteus mirabilis

Escherichia coli

5      Rhodobacter capsulatus or

the DMSO reductase isolated from *R. capsulatus*.

6. A method according to claim 3 wherein the compound of formula (II) is the compound of formula (IIb) and the bioreduction is carried out with

10

Escherichia coli.

7. A method according to claim 3 wherein the compound of formula (II) is the compound of formula (IIc) and the bioreduction is carried out with

15

Proteus vulgaris

Escherichia coli

Rhodobacter capsulatus or

DMSO reductase isolated from *R. capsulatus*.

20

8. A method according to claim 3 wherein the compound of formula (II) is the compound of formula (IId) or (IIe) and the bioreduction is carried out with

Proteus mirabilis or

25      Escherichia coli.

9. A method according to claim 1 substantially as described in any one of the Examples.

30      10. A compound of formula II as defined in claim 1 as a single enantiomer or in an enantiomerically enriched form obtained by the method claimed in any one of claims 1 to 9.

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/SE 95/01416

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC6: C12P 11/00, C07D 401/12

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC6: C12P

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

SE,DK,FI,NO classes as above

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

WPI, IFIPAT, CA, MEDLINE, EMBASE, BIOSIS

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	EP 0005129 A1 (AB HÄSSLE), 31 October 1979 (31.10.79) --	1-4
A	Biosci. Biotech. Biochem., Volume 58, No 3, 1994, M. Abo et al., "Enantioselective Reduction of the Sulfoxideto Sulfide in Methyl Phenyl Sulfoxide by Dimethyl Sulfoxide Reductase from Rhodobacter sphaeroides f.s. denitrificans" page 596 - page 597 --	1-10
A	Biochemical Pharmacology, Volume 48, No 2, 1994, E. Kashiyama et al., "Chiral Inversion of Drug: Role of Intestinal Bacteria in the Stereoselective Sulphoxide Reduction of Flosequinan" page 237 - page 243 --	1-10

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.  See patent family annex.

- \* Special categories of cited documents:
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- "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed
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Date of the actual completion of the international search

19 March 1996

Date of mailing of the international search report

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/  
Swedish Patent Office  
Box 5055, S-102 42 STOCKHOLM  
Facsimile No. + 46 8 666 02 86

Authorized officer

Gerd Strandell  
Telephone No. + 46 8 782 25 00

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**  
Information on patent family members

05/02/96

International application No.

PCT/SE 95/01416

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
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		AT-B-	374473	25/04/84
		AT-B-	375365	25/07/84
		AT-B-	389995	26/02/90
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		AU-A-	4602779	18/10/79
		CA-A-	1127158	06/07/82
		CA-A-	1129417	10/08/82
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